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ABSTRACT

A research project sought to determine adult continuing education students' expectations of teachers. A total of 108 continuing education students from the Clearwater Campus of St. Petersburg Junior College responded to the Survey of Effective Teaching Behavior, which sought to determine criteria adult students use to measure an effective teacher. A literature review was also conducted. Results indicated that the adults' prime concern involved receiving up-to-date information. Adult students also viewed teacher communication and enjoyment of teaching as very important characteristics of an effective teacher. They ranked last the requirement of a large amount of work as a class requirement. Results were then disseminated to teachers and administrators to provide information on how knowledge of preferred teacher expectation can improve continuing education teachers and on how administrators can use the knowledge of preferred teacher expectations to improve instruction. Seven recommendations for the director of continuing education arose from the research results. (YLB)

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EMPLOYING ADULT-STUDENT EXPECTATIONS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION TEACHERS TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTION

By

James W. Pfister

May 1978

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ABSTRACT

EMPLOYING ADULT-STUDENT EXPECTATIONS
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With so many adult students attending college, educators must acquire a better understanding of adults' needs. The primary purpose of this research project involved determining adults' expectations of teachers. To collect data for discovering adult teacher expectations, I developed a one-page instrument entitled "Survey of Effective Teaching Behaviors."

During November-December 1977, a total of 108 continuing education students, randomly selected, returned the survey instrument. To answer research questions about improving instruction, I grouped together all items whose means did not differ significantly from the item with the highest mean at the .05 confidence level. The mean of each item in the group did not vary significantly from the mean of the item in the group receiving highest rank. Eleven groups of means composed the total population surveyed; nine groups of means

composed the male subgroup population, and nine groups of means composed the female subgroup.

Part-time faculty and full-time administrators received three tables constructed from the three subgroups. Two meetings with the administrators and one with the faculty determined strategies for improving instruction by using data from the survey. One outcome of the group meetings resulted in the participants' desire to engage in similar meetings in the future.

Results of the study indicated that the adults' prime concern involved receiving up-to-date information. In addition, adult students view teacher communication as a very important characteristic of an effective teacher. In contrast, adult students ranked last the requirement of a large amount of work as a class requirement.

To improve instruction, I submitted the following recommendations to the director of continuing education:

1. Continuing education staff members should schedule small group meetings with teachers in like subject areas to provide current information.
2. The director of continuing education should conduct a workshop with the professional staff and study teaching styles of current and former continuing education teachers.
3. Master teachers of continuing education should complete the survey form used in this study, and the continuing education staff should compare

their preferences with students' preferences. This information could offer insight toward the profile of the ideal adult teacher. To complete this profile, a statistical study using the discriminant function analysis technique could identify behaviors revealing significant differences of opinion between teachers and students.

4. Continuing education should develop a profile of preferred teacher characteristics to use in teacher selection and retention. In addition, the profile could orient new teachers to adult preferences that will help them toward a more successful teaching experience.

5. Administrators should schedule small group meetings of five to ten teachers to discuss results of this study. These meetings could stimulate teacher agreement on strategies to improve instruction. Basically, this study would serve as a catalyst for bringing teachers together for staff development.

6. Continuing education staff should develop a curriculum for staff and program development in communications since over half of the top-ranked behaviors fall in the category of communications.

7. Institutions which educate and train adult educators should receive the results of this study. Knowledge of these data could help future adult educators become aware of behaviors adult learners perceive as important.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Significance

In the past few years adults in ever increasing numbers participated in continuing education activities. One primary cause of increased adult enrollment stems from acceptance of life-long learning. Fred M. Hechinger, formerly education editor of the New York Times, states: "Continuing education, long viewed with disdain by university regulars, has suddenly been discovered as a wave of the future" (14:14). One reason for increased interest in the adult student rests in the federal government's recognition that traditional students no longer dominate the educational scene. I define traditional students as eighteen- to twenty-four-year olds, and adult students as twenty-five or older. (This definition conforms to the 1977 Southern Regional Education Board [34:10].)

Common words spoken these days include "continuing education," "adult education," "extension," and the relatively new term, "life-long learning." President Carter's inclusion of $12.5 million in his budget to fund the Title I Higher Education Act of 1965 makes prospects for adult education optimistic (21:20). The new life-long learning section, Title I, Part B, of the 1976 amendments, encompasses "adult

basic education, continuing education, independent study, agriculture education, business education and labor education, occupational education and job training programs, parent education, postsecondary education, preretirement education and education for older and retired people, remedial education, special educational programs for groups or individuals with special need" (21:20). One of the 1976 amendments to the Higher Education Act Title X specifically authorizes the federal government to spend $15 million to improve and expand community colleges. Although these 1976 amendments remain unfunded, increased interest in adult learning enhances likelihood of funding in the next year or so (21:20).

Until recently, education generally emphasized youth. In the past the American educational system dwelled on a society oriented to youths and jobs (2:274). Even adult education leaned toward activities preparing individuals for better or different jobs. Thus, only a small portion of education focused on skills required for enjoying living (2:174).

Continuing education activities provide a unique dimension to St. Petersburg Junior College. Learning activities available to adults include credit and noncredit offerings on or off campus, depending on participants' needs and desires. These activities include courses, seminars, workshops, forums, and clinics. Prior to 1969, 745 participants enrolled in continuing education activities; in fiscal 1977

over 17,000 persons engaged in continuing education activities (32:4).

President Michael M. Bennett emphasized during the fall 1977 faculty meeting that we must recognize adult students' needs. Also, he mentioned that older adults constitute a greater proportion of the adult student population than in past years and adult enrollment will continue to increase. His statements are in line with national predictions by the Carnegie Foundation. According to a 1975 study persons over age twenty-four will continue to enroll in higher education at increasing rates through 1985 (6:42). The state of Florida predicts that continuing education students in Florida's community colleges will increase from 253,175 in 1974 to over 472,000 in 1981 (10:1).

With so many adult students attending college, educators must acquire a better understanding of adults' needs and desires. In this study I will consider continuing education students' perceptions of effective teacher behavior. Continuing education students possess definite thoughts about what constitutes a good teacher. Daily, students ask members of the staff questions about teachers before deciding to enroll in a particular course. At best, students can only guess whether a teacher will satisfy their expectations.

The tremendous influx of adult students since 1969 necessitated the increased employment of part-time faculty. Most of the approximately 150 continuing education instructors engage in full-time professions in addition to part-time

teaching. Since most continuing education students represent a much older population than traditional students of eighteen to twenty-four, knowledge of preferred teacher behavioral characteristics could help instructors become more effective. Awareness of student expectations would allow instructors to modify their teaching behaviors to stimulate student learning. Bender and Breuder concluded that "very little has been done to assist part-time faculty to improve their instruction or to have a better understanding of the people they serve" (3:37).

With so many adults returning to college, administrators need to hire teachers who can teach adults competently. If administrators know adult expectations of teachers, they can use that information to hire skilled faculty. In addition, knowledge of adult expectations will allow administrators to help current instructors increase their competencies. I believe this study will provide administrators with a plan to help teachers meet adult students' expectations.

Statement of the Problem

In this study I seek to determine adult continuing education students' expectations of teachers. This information will set in motion a plan to help continuing education faculty improve their teaching skills. I believe that if teachers in various courses understand xpectations of adult students, they can increase their effectiveness. Also presenting this information on effective teachers to administrators in continuing education should result in their employing

faculty who understand adult students' expectations. If administrators know behavioral characteristics adults expect of teachers, logically we can assume better hiring practices will result. Consequently, in this study I address the following research questions:

1. What behavioral expectations about teachers do most adult continuing education students prefer?
2. How can knowledge of preferred teacher expectations improve continuing education teachers?
3. How can administrators use knowledge of preferred teacher expectations to improve instruction?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Characteristics of Adult Learners

Historically, American higher education geared its courses for young, single, unemployed adults who devoted full time for four years to obtain a college education. These traditional students no longer form the majority of America's learning force (8:10). In fact, part-time students constitute two thirds of the nation's community college enrollment (8:40). Nearly half of these students are at least twenty-one years of age and attend credit courses. Many of them already hold baccalaureate and advanced degrees, but attend classes to satisfy a wide range of individual objectives (19:20).

Participation in adult education corresponds closely with educational level. In 1975, a U.S. study showed that among those who did not finish high school, only 4.4 percent of white males and 2.4 percent of black males participated in adult education activities (27:100). Of the college graduates, 29.0 percent of white males and 26.8 percent of black males participated in some adult education activity (27:100). Black females participated more frequently than white females, among both those who dropped out of high school and those

who graduated (26:100). Among female college graduates, however, participation of races did not vary significantly (27:100).

Family earning influences adult learner participation. Activities in adult education increase with higher family earnings. In 1972, U.S. families with incomes of less than $4,000 showed a participation rate of 5.5 percent, whereas those families earning $25,000 and over revealed a rate of 20.3 percent (27:100). These figures indicate that higher-income individuals will more likely enroll in adult education programs than will low-income individuals.

Bergevin maintains that understanding adult learner characteristics and basic spiritual, social, and physical needs helps educators deal more effectively with adult students. All adult students come to a class or to a program for a reason. Some attend voluntarily; some, involuntarily. In each case the adult learner expects to receive some benefit from the class (4:123). The formation of his expectations may occur during the class if he came without any firm ideas about what to expect. If he attends voluntarily, most likely positive expectations will result about what he should learn (4:127). Adult learners may harbor unrealistic expectations, or they may harbor realistic expectations. Most important, though, adults' expectations need consideration.

Significant differences in lifestyle exist between children under eighteen and adults over eighteen. Society expects children to engage in learning as a full-time

occupation. In contrast, adults usually accept non-educational tasks as a primary lifestyle. By necessity, the major occupation of earning a living takes precedence over learning. Children attend daily institutions that conduct classes, but adults seldom associate with such institutions (17:107, 108). In addition, in the past if adults wanted an education, they needed to enroll in classes planned for youth. Only within the past few years has recognition of different lifestyles provided for adult curricula (19:37).

Morgan, Holmes, and Bundy believe that the same general principles apply to adult education that apply to other levels of education (23:14). The main difference rests primarily in application and emphasis. Accordingly, rather than considering the needs and interests of children, adult education considers the needs and interests of mature persons (23:14).

To learn effectively, individuals must possess a desire to learn. This fact vividly depicts adults under no compulsion to attend classes or prepare assignments. This desire to learn may stem from deep interest in some subject, or it may result from need for some knowledge or skill to meet a current problem (23:15). Therefore, adult students must want to learn or they will not accomplish much.

A clear understanding of course objectives helps adult students plan their strategies for reaching course goals (23:15). Such understanding allows them to learn more rapidly and effectively than if they do not understand course

tasks. Another aspect of adults understanding tasks concerns teaching strategies (23:15). Namely, planning teaching materials and activities should involve considering the level of the adult learner's educational background and experience (23:15). Pitching instruction on a level far above the student's ability to understand results in discouragement and little learning. Likewise, instruction on a level too low fails to challenge the student; consequently, he may lose interest (23:15).

All learning results from the student's activity. A teacher can offer encouragement and support the student's effort to learn, but only the student can exercise his own mental and physical faculties to become educated. Thus, the teacher's job consists chiefly of setting the stage for learning and then trying to stimulate the student to act (23:15).

Practicing an activity usually increases learning, and the amount of repetition needed depends upon the difficulty of material presented; the amount of thinking involved; and the vividness, interest, attention, and effect of the activity (23:15). Repeating a new activity after a short time interval more likely will cause permanent learning than will immediate repetition of a new activity. Regular use of a learning experience allows permanent retention. Something once learned but not used fades from the learner's memory. Adult education provides many opportunities for students to use learned material in conjunction with their

jobs. For instance, a young businessman may study accounting while starting a new record system for his business. An auto mechanic may learn about the electrical system of an automobile during an evening class and work on automobiles for pay during the day (23:16).

Adults learn more permanently by associating ideas or facts with other ideas or facts rather than learning ideas or facts singly (23:16). The idea of learning by association dates as far back as Aristotle and particularly applies to adults because they possess a larger store of ideas and experiences which they can tie into new learning (23:16). Students of all ages, however, learn more effectively if items studied relate to events outside the course which students already understand (23:16).

Although general learning principles apply to all ages, adults differ from children in ways they learn. Malcolm Knowles contends, however, that most information about teaching comes from experience with teaching children. Therefore, most theories of learning rely on the definition of education as a means of transferring the culture. He defines the teaching of children as pedagogy, "the art and science of teaching children" (20:37).

Knowles defines the emerging technology of adult learning as andragogy or the "art and science of helping adults learn" (20:39). Andragogy relies on at least four important assumptions of adult-learner characteristics that differ from assumptions about child learners:

> These assumptions are that, as a person matures, 1.) his self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directing human being; 2.) he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning; 3.) his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles; and 4.) his time perspective changes from one of postponed applications of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness (20:39).

In 1927 Thorndike reported that the ability to learn declines only slowly after age twenty. These findings provided a milestone for adult education. A new awareness of adult learners resulted from the scientific proof that adults can learn. Thorndike's discovery became the basis for one of Knowles's key assumptions about adult learning--that adults can learn (20:50).

Adult learners possess the characteristic of learning through an internal process. Their motivation to learn exists to the extent they see a particular goal fulfilled, and the amount of interaction influences the quality of learning, the learning environment, and the teacher's effectiveness. To enhance learning, the teacher must create a rich environment for students and then guide their interactions. Educators need to recognize the important implication that methods which involve the adult learner in self-directed inquiry will produce the greatest learning (20:51).

Much of the research on what motivates adults to learn comes from survey inventories (25:666,667). Johnstone and Riveria (18) found that younger adults and persons from

lower socio-economic strata expressed more vocation-related reasons; older and higher socio-economic status learners expressed more reasons related to non-vocational endeavors. Another national survey of prospective and currently enrolled adult learners determined that, in the latter group, men more often reported job- and employment-related reasons as very important, whereas women more often expressed curiosity, personal fulfillment, and "getting away from the routine of daily living" as motivation for engaging in educational activities (7:44). With regard to educational and occupational differences, this study concluded that individuals with higher educational levels more often reported community and social goals; and adult learners in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs frequently reported reasons related to a desire "to be a happier person" and "to escape from routine" (7:44). These two studies highlight how various groups of adult learners attach different priorities to attending continuing education activities.

Trends in Adult Enrollment

College profiles show clientele changing from younger to older students. Recently, enrollment of eighteen-to twenty-four-year olds began stablizing after years of steady growth, perhaps because of a less favorable job market for graduates. As a result, traditional college students (18-24 years old) may begin to view college as a poor investment and attend in fewer numbers (34:10).

A most important force affecting future college enrollment in the South will involve smaller growth and, in some states, decline among traditional students from 1975 to 1985 (34:5). In the nation their number will decline from 1980 to 1985 by 5.5 percent, and in the South by 3.4 percent (34:5). In contrast, Florida's forecast suggests that all age groups will continue to grow through 1980 even though growth rates will vary from age group to age group. Of all age groups, adults will incur the greatest growth. By 1980 the Florida population will include almost as many adults over sixty-five as children from infancy to age fourteen (1:23).

Decline in the school-age population points to the need for more programs to serve adults older than the traditional college ages of eighteen to twenty-four. Older-adult programs include course for vocational competencies, courses in general education, and courses in community instructional services (1:23). To meet adult educational requirements, community colleges will need to develop a new awareness of older students.

Part-time students will continue to account for a larger segment of the total college population. Nationwide, the percentage of part-time students could rise from 38 percent in 1974 to 43 percent in 1985 (26:21). Although the South claimed only 33 percent of enrollment as part-time in 1974, such enrollment should increase to about the 43 percent projected national average (26:70).

Specific reasons relating to the job and to the family explain the increase in part-time enrollment. Older students more likely involve themselves with family and job commitments. In addition, older workers need to renew their educational and career skills more regularly because of the large number of college graduates entering the labor force. Many professions require continuing education courses for relicensure--which also increases the number of adult students (34:16).

This increased educational involvement of older adults will result in noncredit enrollment becoming more popular in the future. From 1974 to 1984 predicted enrollment not related to a bachelor's or higher degree should increase from 10.0 to 15.5 percent, primarily at the expense of undergraduate and first-professional-degree enrollment. The greater proportion of older students, women students, students employed full-time, and students who choose to attend part-time will cause the shift to more non-degree study. These adult students will attend college to upgrade skills for their current jobs or to prepare for other jobs. In addition, more persons will enroll for avocational and cultural reasons. Therefore, traditional emphasis on a direct route to the bachelor's degree will decline (34:18).

By 1985, public two-year institutions should claim a larger proportion of total enrollment than in 1975 (34:18). In the South, public two-year colleges should hold 37 percent of total enrollment, as opposed to 32.2 percent in

1975 (34:18). The major reason for the increase lies in students over twenty-five generally enrolling in two-year institutions: over 73 percent of these students spend their first two years of college in a two-year institution (35:1).

Predictions of increased adult enrollment emphasize educators' knowing older adults' needs and desires. Usually, emphasis on faculty evaluation determines qualities that constitute an effective teacher. These evaluations, however, should stress helping teachers meet adult learners' expectations. Medsker and Tillery believe more information should exist about adult students' needs:

> A paucity of information exists about most of these older students particularly the ones attending part-time. That they have jobs and family responsibilities and are highly motivated goes without saying, but information about their various abilities, interests, and intellectual predispositions is still needed. More than any other institution, the community college seems destined to become the most significant medium for continuing education, the educational center in its local community, but it will need data about its clients in order to do its job well (22:49).

Life-long Learning and Adult Learning Theory

Rather than reaching completion after twelve or sixteen years of formal work, recently education has become a life-long process. People of all ages attend educational activities in traditional classroom settings as well as on-the-job training. Malcolm Knowles states:

> One mission of the adult educator, then, can be stated positively as helping individuals to develop the attitude that learning is a life-long process and to acquire the skills of self-directed learning. In this sense, one of the tests of everything the adult educator does,

> whether it be to conduct a course in hat making, a human relations workshop or a staff meeting, is the extent to which the participants leave a given experience with heightened curiosity and with increased ability to carry on their own learning (20:23).

With the increased attention devoted to adult learners, educators can no longer presume that college exists for the young. Not too many years ago an older adult who graduated from college would attract media attention, but today Americans view learning as a life-long pursuit and do not consider it unusual to hear of an older adult receiving a college degree. National legislation to promote life-long learning vividly demonstrates the surge for providing educational opportunities for all ages. Hesburg, Miller, and Wharton suggest that for noncredit programs, the academic service areas should assign significant priority to programs serving the educationally neglected (15:83). They define educationally neglected as persons inadequately served by higher education, including older adults, the disadvantaged, minorities, the occupationally displaced, women, and the socially distressed (15:83).

The drive to serve these clientele need not exist only for altruistic purposes. A recent article in the Wall Street Journal stated that many colleges run huge operating deficits because of declining enrollments of younger adults (12:1). Last fall for the first time in 24 years of enrollment increases, the total flattened at 11.3 million students (12:1). Kenneth McKenaie of the State University of New York

warns that "colleges will have to find alternate student bodies if they wish to remain operating" (12:1).

Generally, the above quotation illustrates that higher education emphasizes youth. That is, the education system in this country focuses on youth and jobs. Even continuing education leans toward activities that prepare an individual for a better or a different job. Unfortunately, this age discrimination still exists in many colleges and universities (5:68). With the decrease of younger students, however, it seems likely that age discrimination will diminish. In the search for new revenues, approximately one third of the 3,000 colleges in the U.S. offer some kind of adult education, often called continuing education (12:1). This figure approximates a 10 percent increase since 1970 (12:1).

When planning activities for adult learners, the instructor must know what needs motivate them to learn. Knowles identifies the need to achieve complete self-identity as important to adult learners (20:23). Maslow arranges human needs in five categories: (1) physiological or survival; (2) safety; (3) love, affection, and belonging; (4) individual esteem; (5) self-actualization (the highest need) (20:24). Therefore, Knowles contends that Maslow's hierarchy of needs implies that adult educators should help individuals gratify their needs at whatever level they seek to attain (20:24).

In addition to recognizing adult learners' needs, Havighurst and Orr propose that adults experience phases of growth and resulting developmental tasks, readiness to learn,

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Field Setting

St. Petersburg Junior College, a public, multi-campus, community college, provides educational facilities in Clearwater, St. Petersburg, and Tarpon Springs, Pinellas County, Florida. In addition to these locations, in Pinnellas Park, Florida, the college maintains a district-wide central office. The Continuing Education Division exists as part of central administration with responsibilities for campus as well as off-campus activities. With the origination of the current emphasis continuing education in 1969, noncredit enrollment grew from 745 persons in 1969 to over 17,000 in 1977 (32:4).

In Pinellas County the median age of 48.1 years ranks considerably higher than the national median of 28.1 years (30:4). Furthermore, residents 45 years or older represent 53.3 percent of the total county population (30:5). The county's population swells from tourists during various periods of the year, especially during winter. On 1 April 1977, the estimated permanent population of Pinellas County reached approximately 709,000 residents (29:4).

and teachable moments. They divide the adult years into three phases: early adulthood (18-30), middle age (30-55), and later maturity (55 and over). Havighurst and Orr state that since developmental tasks of youth consist primarily of physiological and mental maturation, adults engage in developing social roles such as finding and keeping a job. They conclude, "People do not launch themselves into adulthood with the momentum of their childhood and youth and simply coast along to old age. Adulthood has its transition points and its crises. It is a developmental period in almost as complete a sense as childhood and adolescence are developmental periods" (13:1).

Knowles maintains that adults learn by interacting with other students, by sharing experiences and ideas. With this climate of sharing between students and teacher, the adult student learns actively, not passively. Knowles outlines the andragological process as follows:

1. Establishing a climate conducive to adult learning
2. Creating an organizational structure for participative planning
3. Diagnosing needs for learning
4. Formulating directions for learning (objectives)
5. Developing a design of activities
6. Operating the activities
7. Rediagnosing needs for learning (evaluation) (20:24).

In this study I assumed participants answered the survey consistent with their perceptions. Also I assumed that participants surveyed at the Clearwater campus reflect the views of students on the St. Petersburg campus and at the Tarpon Springs Center. Furthermore, I believed the results of this study will comprise criteria for in-service training for teachers and improve instruction in all divisions of the college.

Design

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What teacher behaviors do most adult continuing education students prefer?
2. How can knowledge of preferred teacher expectations improve continuing education teachers?
3. How can administrators use the knowledge of preferred teacher expectations to improve instruction?

To answer these questions, I developed a one-page instrument entitled "Survey of Effective Teaching Behaviors" for distribution to noncredit continuing education students enrolled during September-December 1977 (see Appendix A). The construction of the instrument entailed modifying an instrument developed and used by John M. Nickens in a study for the Florida Community/Junior College Inter-institutional Research Council (28:14). Nickens granted approval to modify the instrument used in his study

The study conducted in 1975 by the Inter-institutional Research Council validated Nicken's instrument. To establish further validity of the modified instrument, I consulted with the following panel of judges from St. Petersburg Junior College:

Johnnie R. Clarke, associate dean of academic affairs

Margaret A. Denty, management information systems coordinator

David B. Fellows, director of continuing education

Jane Maddox, women's center of continuing education

J. Bernadine Miller, continuing education health programs coordinator

Norman L. Stephens, Jr., dean of college systems

All of these individuals involve themselves in learning activities which include adult students who attend St. Petersburg Junior College. The final survey instrument incorporated recommendations suggested by the panel (see Appendix A).

Approximately one hundred continuing education noncredit students randomly selected from classes held at the Clearwater campus during September-December 1977 participated in the survey. A cover letter attached to the one-page survey instrument explained the purpose of the survey (see Appendix B) which sought to determine criteria adult students use to measure an effective teacher. The completed forms were returned directly to the instructors who then sent them to the continuing education office.

Procedures for Acquiring Data

The director of continuing education granted me permission to conduct the survey; and, subsequently, several professional staff members discussed the study. A random sample (approximately 10 percent) of individuals enrolled in continuing education courses at the Clearwater campus during fall 1977 participated in the study. I selected participants from course rolls arranged numerically by course and section number in an ascending order. A table of random numbers determined the selection of the first participant. Thereafter, every tenth person served as a participant, with every eleventh and twelfth persons designated first and second alternates, respectively.

Approximately 1100 students attended approximately 50 classes at the Clearwater campus during the survey period. This number comes from continuing education's average of 23 students per class during 1976-77. Approximately 100 students constituted the sample. Without any previous knowledge of the survey, the student received a copy of the instrument from the instructor. Prior to leaving the class, the student returned the completed form to the instructor. If the designated student did not appear in class on the night of the survey, the first or second alternate received the form.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 as the highest rating, the student rated teacher characteristics. Approximately fifteen minutes allowed the student adequate time to complete

the form. Upon completion, students returned the survey to their respective instructors, who sent the completed forms to the continuing education office the following day.

Procedures for Treating the Data

Analysis of data provided information necessary to answer the first research question:

What behavioral expectations about teachers do most adult continuing education students prefer?

Each behavioral characteristic listed on the instrument could receive a score of one, two, three, four, or five from each participant. The total score from all participants formed the basis for ranking the characteristics. In addition, the characteristics received a ranking from the highest to the lowest by mode. (Calculation of the weighted mean and the mode of each characteristic appear in the presentation of data.) The surveyed participants fell into four program classifications of continuing education; distributive; trade and industrial; citizenship; avocational. Behavioral characteristics received a ranking according to the weighted mean within each category.

When means appear ranked in order from highest to lowest, we must recognize that the mean of the highest ranked item may not vary significantly from the mean of the second, third, or fourth items. Likewise, the mean of the lowest ranked item may not vary significantly from the means

of the second- or third-lowest ranked items. Therefore, to organize the behaviors into logical groups, ranges of means not differing significantly cluster. The composition of the first group included all items with means not significantly different from the item with highest mean. Statistically, no degree of certainty exists that respondents preferred item one over item two or item three. Therefore, I grouped together all items whose means did not differ significantly from the item with highest mean at .05 confidence level. The second group included all items with means not significantly different at the .05 confidence level from the mean of the item ranked highest in the second group. The same logic flows for the third, fourth, fifth, and succeeding groups. The mean of each item in the group is not significantly different from the mean of the item in the group receiving the highest rank. For the total population surveyed, eleven groups of means I defined: For the female subgroup population, I defined eight groups of means; and for the male subgroup population, I defined nine groups of means (see tables VI, VII, and VIII).

The solution to the first question provided information necessary to answer the second research question:

> How can knowledge of preferred teacher expectations improve continuing education teachers?

One teacher from each program area received a list of the total population with eleven groups of behaviors, a list of the female subgroup population with eight groups, and a list

of the male subgroup population with nine groups (see tables VI, VII, and VIII). Each teacher received instructions both by phone and by letter to evaluate the lists in terms of usefulness to the instructor for improving instruction. Within one week after instructors received the lists compiled from the study, I scheduled a meeting with the four instructors to conduct a group problem-solving session for developing strategies to improve instruction. At the session, I introduced group members to one another and explained the purpose of the meeting. When all teachers understood the meeting's purpose, I asked them to state what they believed could improve instruction. I explained that these ideas were nonevaluative, hoping members of the group would contribute every possible idea without the restriction of first deciding its worth. Next, we evaluated all the ideas and ranked them from highest to lowest. Then the group consolidated the best ideas as agreed upon by consensus. As a final step, a strategy for implementing the ideas evolved, with specific recommendations for the director of continuing education.

The third research question concerned administrators of the college:

How can administrators use the knowledge of preferred teacher expectations to improve instruction?

The entire continuing education administrative staff received a copy of the preferred teacher characteristics. They evaluated the list as to its effectiveness as a tool for

improving instruction. Within one week after each continuing education administrator received the list, I scheduled another group problem-solving session utilizing an approach similar to the one with the four continuing education instructors. The session resulted in recommendations to implement strategies for improving instructor effectiveness.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The increase of adult students attending both credit and noncredit classes at St. Petersburg Junior College prompted me to develop this major applied research project. Many studies seek to find traditional students' expectations of teachers, but few studies seek to identify preferences of adult students. This sparse attention to discovering teacher characteristics adults prefer provided the impetus for developing a profile of teacher characteristics sought by adult students.

Results Related to Research Question One

Analysis of data from the "Survey of Effective Teaching Behaviors" provided information to answer the first research question:

> What behavioral expectations about teachers do most adult continuing education students prefer?

During November 1977, a random sample of 111 continuing education students from the Clearwater Campus received survey instruments. From the total, 108 students completed and returned the survey instrument. This high rate of return (97 percent) resulted partially from the method for collecting

data. Prior to conducting the survey, I called each instructor and explained in detail the purpose and the procedure for completing the survey. In addition, I attended all evening classes on the night of the survey. I believe this close attention to coordinating details of the survey contributed to the unusually high rate of return.

Preferences of adults in the four program classifications revealed that, in some cases, the type of activity resulted in different behavioral preferences. Since only four students in the trade and industrial area responded to the survey, I did not present a table reflecting their preferences according to sex. Table I, however, reports all four programs ranked according to individual preferences of both sexes. The behavior "uses up-to-date material" ranked first from the total of 108 students. The two vocational programs, distributive and trade and industrial, also ranked this behavior first. But the avocational and citizenship students ranked it fifth and sixth, respectively. Two behaviors, "displays skill in communicating with class" and "seems to enjoy teaching," tied for second in the total population. Distributive students ranked these behaviors second and third, respectively; trade students ranked them seventh; citizenship students ranked them third and second, respectively; and, avocational students ranked them sixth and third, respectively. In terms of behaviors least desired, the whole group chose "offers out-of-class assistance," "enriches

TABLE I

ADULT STUDENTS' PREFERENCE OF TEACHERS' BEHAVIORS BY PROGRAM CLASSIFICATIONS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION
N = 108

Behavior	Rank by Means of Programs				
	Distributive	Trade and Industrial	Citizenship	Avocational	Total Programs
Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects	13	7	10	13	13
Requires large amount of work from students	23	25	25	25	25
Explains teacher expectations of students	11	18	20	22	18
Enriches presentation by use of audio-visual aids	25	7	24	24	24
Uses up-to-date material	1	1	6	5	1
Relates material to students' experiences	21	22	8	20	17
Offers out-of-class assistance	24	13	23	23	23
Displays enthusiasm for teaching	6	13	6	1	5
Displays self-confidence	6	7	5	9	6
Conducts fair and helpful evaluations	9	7	18	11	9
Uses a variety of teaching techniques	15	18	22	21	22
Displays skill in communicating with class	2	7	3	6	2
Encourages and guides students in class discussions	15	22	8	18	14

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TABLE I (Continued)

Behavior	Rank by Means of Programs				
	Distributive	Trade and Industrial	Citizenship	Avocational	Total Programs
Maintains students' interest during class	10	18	1	1	4
Organizes class presentations	18	24	21	16	21
Stimulates interest in learning	3	18	15	6	8
Displays a sense of humor	17	18	12	19	5
Meets class on time and keeps appointments	8	3	3	3	11
Considers students' ideas	19	13	14	9	12
Considers students' individual needs	19	18	17	15	15
Treats students as adults and individuals	5	3	12	9	7
Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students	11	3	10	11	10
Maintains appropriate grooming	13	13	19	17	19
Allows students to disagree	22	13	15	14	20
Seems to enjoy teaching	3	7	2	3	2

presentation by use of audiovisual aids," and "requires large amount of work from students."

Teacher preferences by sex varied among the students. Table II reflects preferences of those in distributive programs. Both male and female students agreed that "uses up-to-date material" ranked first, but widely disagreed on several other behaviors. Male students ranked "displays self-confidence" ninth, and female students ranked it second. Female students ranked "maintains students' interest during class" twelfth but males ranked it fourth. Also, male students did not think that displaying a sense of humor should rank as high as did female students and thus ranked it twentieth (females ranked it twelfth). "Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students" received a ranking of twelve by females and seventeen by males. Males ranked the behavior "treats students as individuals" second, whereas females ranked it ninth. Both sexes agreed that "enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids" and "offers out-of-class assistance" do not constitute important characteristics of a teacher.

Adult students enrolled in citizenship courses displayed distinct differences from those in other program areas. Table III illustrates that male students ranked "displays skills in communicating with class" first and female students ranked it third. In contrast, female students ranked "maintains students' interest during class" first; males ranked it third. Males ranked "displays skill in communicating

TABLE II

DISTRIBUTIVE STUDENTS' PREFERENCE OF TEACHERS' BEHAVIORS BY SEX
N = 26

Behavior	Male N	Male Rank	Female N	Female Rank	Overall Rank
Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects	13	12	15	14	13
Requires large amount of work from students	23	12	22	14	23
Explains teacher expectations of students	13	12	12	14	11
Enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids	25	12	24	14	25
Uses up-to-date material	1	12	1	14	1
Relates material to students' experiences	22	12	21	14	21
Offers out-of-class assistance	24	12	25	14	24
Displays enthusiasm for teaching	7	12	4	14	6
Displays self-confidence	9	12	2	14	6
Conducts fair and helpful evaluations	10	12	8	14	9
Uses a variety of teaching techniques	17	12	16	14	15
Displays skill in communicating with class	4	12	4	14	2
Encourages and guides students in class discussions	13	12	17	14	15
Maintains students' interest during class	4	12	12	14	10
Organizes class presentations	13	12	19	14	18
Stimulates interest in learning	4	12	4	14	3
Displays a sense of humor	20	12	12	14	17
Meets class on time and keeps appointments	7	12	7	14	8
Considers students' ideas	13	12	20	14	19
Considers students' individual needs	19	12	18	14	19
Treats students as adults and individuals	2	12	9	14	5
Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students	17	12	9	14	11
Maintains appropriate grooming	17	12	12	14	13
Allows students to disagree	21	12	23	14	22
Seems to enjoy teaching	4	12	4	14	3

TABLE III

CITIZENSHIP STUDENTS' PREFERENCE OF TEACHERS' BEHAVIORS BY SEX
N = 26

Behavior	Male N	Male Rank	Female N	Female Rank	Overall Rank
Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects	10	7	10	19	10
Requires large amount of work from students	24	7	25	18	25
Explains teacher expectations of students	17	7	20	18	20
Enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids	22	7	23	18	24
Uses up-to-date material	3	7	7	19	6
Relates material to students' experiences	6	7	13	19	8
Offers out-of-class assistance	20	7	24	19	23
Displays enthusiasm for teaching	6	7	5	19	6
Displays self-confidence	6	7	5	19	5
Conducts fair and helpful evaluations	17	7	17	18	18
Uses a variety of teaching techniques	20	7	22	19	22
Displays skill in communicating with class	1	7	3	19	3
Encourages and guides students in class discussions	9	7	10	19	8
Maintains students' interest during class	3	7	1	18	1
Organizes class presentations	22	7	21	19	21
Stimulates interest in learning	17	7	13	19	15
Displays a sense of humor	12	7	12	19	12
Meets class on time and keeps appointments	12	7	2	19	3
Considers students' ideas	9	7	15	19	14
Considers students' individual needs	25	7	18	19	17
Treats students as adults and individuals	17	7	10	19	12
Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students	12	7	7	19	10
Maintains appropriate grooming	17	7	19	19	19
Allows students to disagree	9	7	16	19	15
Seems to enjoy teaching	3	7	3	19	2

with class" first, and females ranked "maintains students' interest during class" first. The two characteristics least preferred by females were "offers out-of-class assistance" and "requires large amount of work from students."

Table IV displays avocational students' preferences by sex. Male students ranked as first "maintains students' interest during class," whereas female students ranked first "seems to enjoy teaching." Female students ranked second "meets class on time and keeps appointments" and third "maintains objectivity on controversial subjects." Male students ranked four behaviors second: "displays enthusiasm for teaching"; "displays self-confidence"; "uses a variety of teaching techniques"; and "meets class on time and keeps appointments." Both males and females ranked last the behavior "requires large amount of work from students." Next to the bottom, makes ranked "enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids," and females ranked "offers out-of-class assistance."

Table V provides information on student preference of teacher behaviors according to adult life stages as developed by Gail Sheehy in her book Passages (31). Students in the "pulling up roots" stage (18-21) ranked the following behaviors as a tie for first: "explains teacher expectations of students," "relates material to students' experiences," "offers out-of-class assistance," and "uses a variety of teaching techniques." Those in "the trying twenties" (22-27) ranked both "displays skill in communicating with class" and

TABLE IV

AVOCATIONAL STUDENTS' PREFERENCE OF TEACHERS' BEHAVIORS BY SEX
N = 38

Behavior	Male N	Male Rank	Female N	Female Rank	Overall Rank
Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects	17	14	3	22	13
Requires large amount of work from students	25	15	25	22	25
Explains teacher expectations of students	20	15	23	23	22
Enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids	24	14	22	22	24
Uses up-to-date material	1	15	10	23	5
Relates material to students' experiences	20	15	18	23	20
Offers out-of-class assistance	22	15	24	22	23
Displays enthusiasm for teaching	4	15	4	23	1
Displays self-confidence	4	15	10	23	9
Conducts fair and helpful evaluations	9	15	14	23	11
Uses a variety of teaching techniques	4	15	18	23	21
Displays skill in communicating with class	22	15	13	23	6
Encourages and guides students in class discussions	17	15	17	21	18
Maintains students' interest during class	1	15	7	23	1
Organizes class presentations	11	15	20	23	16
Stimulates interest in learning	9	15	7	23	6
Displays a sense of humor	13	15	21	23	19
Meets class on time and keeps appointments	4	15	2	23	3
Considers students' ideas	11	15	7	23	9
Considers students' individual needs	7	15	15	22	15
Treats students as adults and individuals	13	15	4	23	9
Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students	15	15	10	23	11
Maintains appropriate grooming	18	15	10	23	17
Allows students to disagree	15	15	16	23	14
Seems to enjoy teaching	7	7	1	23	3

TABLE V

TEACHER BEHAVIOR PREFERENCES OF ADULT STUDENTS ACCORDING TO LIFE STAGES DESCRIBED IN PASSAGES
N = 108

Behavior	Life Stage					
	18-21	22-27	28-31	32-39	40-49	50+
	Rank by Mean					
Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects	14	10	18	9	10	12
Requires large amount of work from students	22	25	25	23	24	23
Explains teacher expectations of students	1	22	11	7	18	23
Enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids	22	24	19	24	25	19
Uses up-to-date material	8	3	1	1	3	4
Relates material to students' experiences	1	20	8	13	20	22
Offers out-of-class assistance	1	23	19	25	23	24
Displays enthusiasm for teaching	14	8	6	1	6	7
Displays self-confidence	8	7	17	1	3	4
Conducts fair and helpful evaluations	8	12	11	13	13	13
Uses a variety of teaching techniques	1	15	21	19	22	18
Displays skill in communicating with class	18	1	3	1	1	10
Encourages and guides students in class discussions	8	15	21	13	15	20
Maintains students' interest during class	14	11	5	1	8	6
Organizes class presentations	25	18	20	21	17	21
Stimulates interest in learning	22	5	15	1	6	10
Displays a sense of humor	22	21	9	16	15	10
Meets class on time and keeps appointments	8	3	3	13	9	1
Considers students' ideas	8	8	6	21	15	13
Considers students' individual needs	8	6	11	18	19	15
Treats students as adults and individuals	14	12	9	13	3	4
Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students	18	14	11	9	10	8
Maintains appropriate grooming	22	18	23	16	12	16
Allows students to disagree	14	18	15	19	21	17
Seems to enjoy teaching	18	1	2	7	6	2

"seems to enjoy teaching" first. Students in "passage to the thirties (28-31) ranked "uses up-to-date material" first and "seems to enjoy teaching" second. The "but I'm unique" students (32-39) ranked six behaviors as a tie for first: "uses up-to-date material"; "displays enthusiasm for teaching"; "displays self-confidence"; "displays skill in communicating with class"; and "stimulates interest in learning." Those in the "deadline decade" (40-49) ranked first "displays skill in communicating with class." This group ranked three behaviors second: "uses up-to-date material"; "displays self-confidence"; and "treats students as adults and individuals." And, finally, students in the "renewal" passage (50 and over) ranked first "meets class on time and keeps appointments." This group ranked second "seems to enjoy teaching." Among behaviors ranked low by these groups were "requires large amount of work from students"; "enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids"; and "offers out-of-class assistance."

Results Related to Research Questions Two and Three

Three meetings occurred with full-time administrators and part-time faculty of continuing education. All participants received copies of the preferred teacher characteristics prior to the meetings (see tables VI, VII, and VIII on pages 42-50). In these meetings I sought suggestions that could answer research questions two and three, respectively:

TABLE VI

PREFERRED TEACHING BEHAVIORS OF ALL SURVEYED CONTINUING EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

Behavior	Rank	Mean	Mode	N
Group I				
Uses up-to-date material	1	4.481	5	108
Group II				
Displays skill in communicating with class	3	4.380	5	108
Seems to enjoy teaching	3	4.380	5	108
Maintains students' interest during class	4	4.346	5	107
Group III				
Displays enthusiasm for teaching	5	4.324	5	108
Displays self-confidence	6	4.296	5	108
Treats students as adults and individuals	7	4.278	5	108
Group IV				
Stimulates interest in learning	8	4.213	5	108
Group V				
Conducts fair and helpful evaluations	9	4.144	5	104
Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students	10	4.120	5	108
Meets class on time and keeps appointments	11	4.402	5	107
Considers students' ideas	12	4.083	5	108
Group VI				
Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects	13	4.056	5	107
Encourages and guides students in class discussions	14	4.000	5	105

TABLE VI (Continued)

PREFERRED TEACHING BEHAVIORS OF ALL SURVEYED CONTINUING EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

Behavior	Rank	Mean	Mode	N
Group VII				
Displays a sense of humor	16	3.916	5	107
Considers students' individual needs	16	3.916	5	107
Relates material to students' experience	17	3.898	5	108
Explains teacher expectations of students	18	3.895	5	107
Maintains appropriate grooming	19	3.870	5	108
Group VIII				
Allows students to disagree	20	3.815	4	108
Group IX				
Organizes class presentations	21	3.685	4	108
Uses a variety of teaching techniques	22	3.676	5	108
Group X				
Offers out-of-class assistance	23	3.333	3	106
Enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids	24	3.317	4	104
Group XI				
Requires large amount of work from students	25	2.876	3	105

TABLE VII

PREFERRED TEACHING BEHAVIORS OF SURVEYED FEMALE CONTINUING EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

Behavior	Rank	Mean	N
Group I			
Meets class on time and keeps appointments	1	4.429	70
Uses up-to-date material	2	4.386	70
Group II			
Displays self-confidence	3	4.300	70
Displays skill in communicating with class	5	4.286	70
Treats students as adults and individuals	5	4.286	70
Displays enthusiasm for teaching	7	4.271	70
Seems to enjoy teaching	7	4.271	70
Group III			
Maintains students' interest during class	8	4.217	69
Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects	9	4.174	69
Stimulates interest in learning	10	4.171	70
Group IV			
Conducts fair and helpful evaluations	11	4.101	69
Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students	12	4.100	70
Encourages and guides students in class discussions	13	4.000	68
Group V			
Explains teacher expectations of students	14	3.970	67
Displays a sense of humor	15	3.943	70
Considers students' ideas	16	3.929	70
Considers students' individual needs	17	3.899	69

TABLE VII (Continued)

PREFERRED TEACHING BEHAVIORS OF SURVEYED FEMALE CONTINUING EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

Behavior	Rank	Mean	N
Group VI			
Relates material to students' experiences	18	3.800	70
Organizes class presentations	19	3.797	69
Maintains appropriate grooming	20	3.786	70
Allows students to disagree	21	3.743	70
Uses a variety of teaching techniques	22	3.686	70
Group VII			
Enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids	23	3.343	67
Offers out-of-class assistance	24	3.250	68
Group VIII			
Requires large amount of work from students	25	2.881	67

TABLE VIII

PREFERRED TEACHING BEHAVIORS OF SURVEYED MALE CONTINUING EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

Behavior	Rank	Mean	N
Group I			
Uses up-to-date material	1	4.684	38
Group II			
Displays skill in communicating with class	2	4.579	38
Group III			
Displays enthusiasm for teaching	4	4.447	38
Seems to enjoy teaching	4	4.447	38
Maintains students' interest during class	5	4.421	38
Treats students as adults and individuals	6	4.368	38
Meets class on time and keeps appointments	7	4.342	38
Group IV			
Displays self-confidence	8	4.316	38
Conducts fair and helpful evaluations	9	4.243	37
Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students	10	4.184	38
Group V			
Stimulates interest in learning	12	4.158	38
Considers students' ideas	12	4.158	38
Maintains appropriate grooming	13	4.079	38
Encourages and guides students in class discussions	14	3.974	38

PREFERRED TEACHING BEHAVIORS OF SURVEYED MALE CONTINUING EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

Behavior	Rank	Mean	N
Group VI			
Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects	16	3.947	38
Allows students to disagree	16	3.947	38
Displays a sense of humor	17	3.921	38
Explains teacher expectations of students	19	3.895	38
Organizes class presentations	19	3.895	38
Considers students' individual needs	19	3.895	38
Relates material to students' experiences	21	3.868	38
Group VII			
Uses a variety of teaching techniques	22	3.500	38
Offers out-of-class assistance	23	3.324	37
Group VIII			
Enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids	24	3.324	37
Group IX			
Requires large amount of work from students	25	2.895	38

How can knowledge of preferred teacher expectations improve continuing education teachers?

How can administrators use the knowledge of preferred expectations to improve instruction?

The first group meeting involved the entire administrative staff of continuing education (director of continuing

education and five coordinators) and the dean of college systems. Initially, I stressed we would not evaluate ideas until all members expressed themselves. Although occasionally the group would wander into discussions not relating specifically to the problem, basically discussions centered on these two research questions. Results of the first meeting provided the following suggestions for using the data to improve teachers and instruction:

For evaluation of teacher effectiveness (to help teachers improve or for documentation)

For assistance in planning for professional development

For teacher selection and/or retention

For developing a course evaluation form using data from study (compare data from study with teachers' students using same instrument)

For self-development of teachers

For encouraging administrators to promote and provide up-to-date material

For administrators to evaluate the data with teachers, item by item, to determine the importance of each behavior (item analysis)

For administrators to conduct group meetings with faculty to evaluate the data and select the most important behaviors

For administrators to use the information in orientation of new instructors

For administrators to develop a strategy that matches student expectations with teacher expectations to change student attitudes

At the end of the first meeting (which lasted approximately one hour), participants commented on the many positive aspects of the meeting. As a consequence, by consensus the group agreed a second meeting would benefit everyone. Accordingly, I scheduled a second meeting for the following week and provided administrators a copy of the first meeting's results.

One week later a second meeting included five of the seven administrators who attended the first meeting. The ten suggestions resulting from the first meeting we categorized into three main groups:

Professional Development

For evaluation of teacher effectiveness (to help teachers improve or for self-development)

For assistance in planning for professional development

For developing a course evaluation form using data from study (compare data from study with teachers' students using same instrument)

For self-development of teachers

For administrators to evaluate the data with teachers, item by item, to determine the importance of each behavior (item analysis)

For teacher retention

For administrators to use the information in orientation of new instructors

For teacher selection

Program Evaluation of Quality of Instruction

For administrators to conduct group meetings of faculty to evaluate the data and select the most important behaviors

For encouraging administrators to promote and provide up-to-date material

For administrators to develop a strategy that matches student expectations with teacher expectations to change attitudes

In addition to categorizing these ideas, the group discussed this study's implications for improving instruction at St. Petersburg Junior College.

Four teachers from the part-time continuing education faculty who demonstrated outstanding teaching skills attended the third meeting. They represented four program areas that included courses in marine biology, real estate, report writing, and fashion for today's women. This group expressed similar suggestions concerning item analysis of the behaviors. Interestingly, the teachers also expressed a desire to attend workshops such as those administrators suggested. They believed the exchange of ideas and teaching experiences would benefit all.

Many ideas and suggestions to improve instruction arose from the three group meetings. Group members expressed that all teacher behaviors are important aspects of an adult teacher's profile since only one of the twenty-five behaviors, "requires a large amount of work," received a mean below 3.0 on a scale of 1 to 5. Since fourteen behaviors received a mean of 4.0 or above, however, participants suggested those behaviors be emphasized for improving instruction.

During one meeting, administrators compared former and current continuing education faculty with results of the study. Successful teachers identified by the group exhibited behaviors ranked highest in the study. Conversely, unsuccessful teachers no longer employed by the college appeared lacking in the more desirable behaviors. Members of the group believed that comparisons of teachers with the results of the study could help identify master teachers and recognize ineffective teachers. They thought, too, that workshops designed specifically for improving instruction would help administrators throughout the year.

All three meetings resulted in discussions of how results of the study could improve instruction. Considerable discussion focused on the importance of providing up-to-date material for adult students. Group members agreed unanimously that relevance is indeed the primary concern of adult learners.

Another behavior group members thought important to discuss was "organizes class presentations." One member

expressed surprise at the low ranking of this behavior. After considerable discussion, however, the group agreed that the reason for this low ranking is that adult students want spontaneous, flexible classes relating to their needs rather than rigid, unresponsive classes. An example of rigidity offered by the group involved a teacher who required breaks occur at a specified time regardless of the topic of discussion or students' desires.

Two other low-ranked behaviors, "uses audiovisual aids" and "uses a variety of teaching techniques" provoked surprise in some group members because they believed these behaviors should rank much higher. The majority, however, eventually agreed that adults prefer active learning experiences, not passive ones such as viewing films or examining charts. One reason for the preference of active involvement is that adults attend classes for socializing as well as for learning. We cited one contrast between traditional students and nontraditional students: nontraditional students such as adults attend class for a specific reason and will allow the teacher more latitude in presenting the material--thus, one possible reason for the low ranking of "uses a variety of teaching techniques." On the other hand, traditional students may enroll in courses primarily for credit and not because of a particular interest; as a result, teachers may need to use audiovisual material or vary their teaching techniques to maintain interest.

Members of the groups concluded that the lowest ranked behavior, "requires a large amount of work," reflects that adult learners are busy and resent extensive outside class assignments. The groups agreed that although adults will complete extra work outside class, they probably prefer a choice. Therefore, we suggested that adult teachers provide students information about where they can locate further material on a particular subject.

Another behavior causing extensive discussion was "displays a sense of humor." Many members of the groups found it interesting that this behavior's mean ranked below 4.0. We discussed several continuing education teachers, both current and past, in relation to their use of humor. One example of a former teacher who proved ineffective in the use of humor involved his trying to please the class by telling jokes--at the expense of providing helpful information. Yet, teachers knowledgeable in their subject matter did not need humor to gain interest. Members of the group agreed that adult learners attend classes for specific reasons and, thus, want information. When a teacher provides that information, adult students may allow him to be humorous. But teachers should not try to be humorous until they have won the students' respect.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

During the 1970's a back-to-school boom of adult students emerged into staggering proportions both locally and nationally. St. Petersburg Junior College shares in this tremendous growth of adult learners. Prior to 1969, 745 participants enrolled in continuing education activities; in fiscal 1977 over 17,000 participants engaged in continuing education activities (32:4). Many reasons account for adults' migration back to the classroom, but one that stands out is the federal government's recognition that eighteen-to-twenty-four-year-old students no longer constitute the majority. In addition, many adults return to school to prepare for new occupations or just for the joy of learning about a new subject. As a result, educators show more concern for discovering new ways to serve adult learners.

This Major Applied Research Project provided a means for improving instruction of adults at St. Petersburg Junior College. During November 1977, 108 continuing education students from the Clearwater Campus returned survey forms designed to measure adults' teacher preferences. The data gathered from these forms provided a vehicle for conducting

three group meetings composed of full-time administrators and part-time continuing education faculty. From these meetings, important suggestions for change emerged.

Implications

An important implication for adult teachers rests in providing relevant, current information for their students. Both the literature and the survey indicated these adult learners attend classes because of their interest in a particular subject. Generally they do not attend class because of traditional reasons for attending college--obtaining credit hours to receive a credential. Rather, adult learners want information that pertains specifically to their needs and, thus, insist on up-to-date material. They want practical, workable, relevant material they can use immediately.

If adult teachers must provide up-to-date material, then administrators should assume some responsibility for providing teachers with current information. Obviously, an administrator cannot be an expert on every subject, but he should communicate his support of teachers' efforts to provide students current information. Furthermore, the administrator should urge his teachers to use relevant information and to help students learn techniques for keeping abreast of up-to-date information.

Adult students ranked the characteristic "seems to enjoy teaching" as a very important teaching behavior. For teachers to convey their enjoyment of teaching, they need to be well-informed and enthusiastic. Thus,

administrators need to assure that teachers receive special consideration for maintaining a positive classroom climate. For instance, administrators should provide adequate support in terms of physical facilities and supplies as well as emotional support and understanding.

A further implication for adults' teachers arises from the lowest ranked behavior, "requires large amount of work from students." That is, adult students are active individuals with jobs and family responsibilities and with minimum time to devote to outside assignments. Therefore, adult teachers should require no tedious or irrelevant busy work outside the classroom.

Another implication for administrators lies in use of data from this study when selecting new teachers. An awareness of adults' preferences can help administrators evaluate the probable teaching success of prospective teachers. For example, an administrator can note the candidate's communication during the interview. Does he speak with enthusiasm about his past teaching experience? Does he express excitement about his subject and his former students? Does he maintain the administrator's interest during the interview or is he boring? Affirmative answers to these questions can help administrators select more competent adult teachers.

A final implication concerns differences among adult students. Results of the study showed that teacher preferences may differ among adults in relation to age, sex, and programs of study. For example, Table V (page 40) illustrates

that eighteen-to-twenty-four-year olds ranked first "explains teacher expectations of students," and those over age fifty ranked it twenty-third. These differences may indicate that further studies should develop a taxonomy of teacher preferences according to subject area, age, and sex.

Recommendations

To improve instruction, the following recommendations I submitted to the director of continuing education:

1. Continuing education staff members should conduct small group meetings with teachers in similar subject areas to provide current information. The focus of these meetings could range from finding materials available locally to locating materials from state and national agencies. These meetings should impress on teachers the importance of providing students with current information.

2. The director of continuing education should conduct a workshop with the professional staff and study teaching styles of current continuing education teachers and former continuing education teachers who have taught during the past two years. Results of this Major Applied Research Project would provide a basis for evaluating characteristics of these teachers. The workshop would serve two purposes: first, identifying master teachers in continuing education; and, second, discussing reasons for not rehiring former teachers because of their teaching behaviors.

3. Master teachers of continuing education should complete the survey form used in this study, and the continuing

education staff should compare their preferences with students' preferences. This information could offer insight toward the profile of the ideal adult teacher. To complete this profile, a statistical study using the discriminant function analysis technique could identify behaviors revealing significant differences of opinion between teachers and students.

4. Continuing education should develop a profile of preferred teacher characteristics to use in teacher selection and retention. In addition, the profile could orient new teachers to adult preferences that will help them toward a more successful teaching experience.

5. Administrators should schedule small group meetings of five to ten teachers to discuss results of this study. These meetings could stimulate teacher agreement on strategies to improve instruction. Basically, this study would serve as a catalyst for bringing teachers together for staff development.

6. Continuing education staff should develop a curriculum for staff and program development in communications since over half of the top-ranked behaviors fall in the category of communications.

7. Institutions which educate and train adult educators should receive the results of this study. Knowledge of these data could help future adult educators become aware of behaviors adult learners perceive as important.

An important result of this study rests in the active involvement of both administrators and teachers in improving instruction at St. Petersburg Junior College. As evidenced from the above recommendations, we need further research on adult student preferences. An annual evaluation to determine changes in teacher behavior should provide follow-up information for remedial and corrective action.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING BEHAVIORS

This form seeks to obtain your opinion on the importance of instructor behaviors. The following list suggests possible behaviors adults expect of instructors. Your view on the importance of each behavior will increase the potential usefulness of these behaviors as a basis for increasing the effectiveness of continuing education instructors. Therefore, please express your judgment regarding the importance of each behavior for effective teaching. Use the rating scale below and record your responses by checking the box of each teacher behavior.

Rating Scale

Very high importance	5
High importance	4
Average importance	3
Low importance	2
Very low importance	1

Teaching Behaviors	Rating Scale 1	2	3	4	5
1. Maintains objectivity on controversial subjects					
2. Requires large amount of work from students					
3. Explains teacher expectations of students					
4. Enriches presentation by use of audiovisual aids					
5. Uses up-to-date material					
6. Relates material to students' experiences					
7. Offers out-of-class assistance					
8. Displays enthusiasm for teaching					
9. Displays self-confidence					
10. Conducts fair and helpful evaluations					
11. Uses a variety of teaching techniques					
12. Displays skill in communicating with class					

Teaching Behaviors

	Rating Scale 1	2	3	4	5
13. Encourages and guides students in discussions					
14. Maintains students' interest during class					
15. Organizes class presentations					
16. Stimulates interest in learning					
17. Displays a sense of humor					
18. Meets class on time and keeps appointments					
19. Considers students' ideas					
20. Considers students' individual needs					
21. Treats students as adults and individuals					
22. Conveys warmth and friendliness to all students					
23. Maintains appropriate grooming					
24. Allows students to disagree					
25. Seems to enjoy teaching					

Please complete the personal data below. The number at the top of the page helps to identify those forms completed for statistical purposes. DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME.

Name of course _____

Date of birth _____

APPENDIX B

Dear Continuing Education Participant,

A recent Wallstreet Journal article entitled "The Graying of the Campus," mentioned that older adults in college activities act younger and receive a new perspective on life. Adults of all ages participate in various learning experiences at St. Petersburg Junior College. With predictions of more and more adults participating in life-long learning experiences, an important priority exists to provide the best instruction possible.

As a member of the staff, I would appreciate your completion of the attached two-page survey of adult expectations of teacher behavior. The validity of the survey depends upon the return of every form since this study serves as a statistical sample of the total population of continuing education students at all campuses. Please return the completed survey form to your instructor at the end of class. Do not sign your name and please be assured that the number at the top of the survey form is for statistical purposes only.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

James W. Pfister
Coordinator